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CAMBODIA: There is some evidence that the government may now be willing to open political discussions with the Khmer Communists.

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In the past, the President has confined the government's approach to the Khmer Communists to a largely unsuccessful rapprochement program. He may in part be responding to concerns expressed by some senior Cambodian officials who consider this course too inflexible and unrealistic in light of the indigenous insurgents' growing strength and capabilities in the countryside. Several have indicated a belief that Communist participation in elections and in the formation of a government of reconciliation is necessary to end what is increasingly becoming a civil war.

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In the present situation, the government can hardly count on a positive Communist response to a bid for high-level negotiations. Khmer Communist leaders have consistently held that no form of political compromise with the Lon Nol government is possible.

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THE YEMENS: Continuing disorder in Sana's southern provinces underscores the obstacles to unity plans with Aden.

[redacted] in late November serious clashes occurred between local inhabitants and a large government force sent to restore order. Successive attempts by these troops to discipline the population and intervene in local problems have further alienated local residents and generated armed resistance to the government actions.

Sana's traditional problems with its southern population, which stem in part from religious differences between the northern and southern sections of the country, are apparently being exacerbated by the Adeni regime. Weapons recently arrived in the troubled area from Aden, and some of the terrorist incidents against government forces have allegedly been instigated by elements from Yemen (Aden).

Adeni-inspired terrorist activity in the southern provinces continued during the first week in December at approximately the same low level that has existed since the cease-fire between Sana and Aden began in October. In addition, Adeni sympathizers, using arms infiltrated from the south, in late November gained control of several Yemen (Sana) villages near the ill-defined border between the two countries.

The current trouble does not appear to be critical, but Aden's involvement is likely to continue as its supporters persist in their efforts to maintain or expand their influence into the territory controlled by Sana, thus adding another note of discord to unity talks between the two Yemens.

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